

Andrea Gilbreath

Birmingham, Alabama 35401

"Good morning, gentlepersons. I am technology coordinator for Tuscaloosa City Schools and would like to let you know how important the E-Rate program is to our system. Although Tuscaloosa's population is around 55% white, our schools are 76% black. Many affluent families send their children to private schools while our neediest little ones go without.

We have 13 schools that are close to 100% free and reduced lunch. E-Rate has allowed me to purchase good switches and wireless equipment for these schools as well as additional wiring to support the wireless access points and the wired devices for labs and library computers.

Without E-Rate, the digital divide would make it difficult for the students who live in poverty to access the high-quality learning resources available to our affluent residents. E-Rate allows children who have never left Tuscaloosa to visit and interact with people all over the world.

We appreciate anything you can do to help us continue this funding program to assist our students. They will be our doctors, lawyers, mechanics, and politicians in the future. Thank you!"